

Arizona Invasive Species Advisory Council

April 20, 2006 10:00a.m. - 4:00p.m.

Arizona Department of Agriculture – Room 206

1688 West Adams Street, Phoenix

MEETING NOTES

Larry Riley called the meeting to order at 10:00am. Mr. Riley thanked the Council for their persistence, dedication, and patience with this and asked if there were any immediate issues with the Agenda and none were presented.

Review and Vote on Minutes/Notes

Mike Macauley wanted a change to the second page, third paragraph about the closed canopy discussion. Mr. Macauley further noted that the sentence should read, “When there is enough moisture to reach the ground...” Someone noted that under Control and Management, in the 4th line, replace patterns with programs. There were no further discussions on any changes.

Bill Werner motioned and Mr. Macauley seconded the acceptance of the meeting notes from the March 29th AISAC meeting. **Motioned approved by Council.**

Working Group Discussions

Control and Management

Joanne Roberts introduced Tani Hubbard from the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum who gave a brief history of the database presentation and how it came to be. Ms. Hubbard talked about the programs associated with the database and how all the data is downloaded into the National Database where anyone can query and download files or use mapping functions. People can also track any efforts and map out treatments and the effectiveness of those treatments. As they started developing partnerships with local state/federal agencies and talked about tracking and mapping efforts without overlapping data, they began discussions with the University of Arizona’s Office of Arid Lands Studies to develop a web based model that can handle those issues for the invaders program and our partners. They soon realized that the issue was much larger than the invader’s program. This led to the model of the Cross-Jurisdictional, Interactive Database and Mapping System for Invasive Species. Dr. Barron Orr from the University of Arizona’s Office of Arid Lands Studies was introduced and he gave a PowerPoint presentation on this model of the database.

Some questions were brought up after the presentation. The first was on the limitation on rules on private land data and it was noted that Privacy is a major issue. Will urban and cropland be included? Yes. The council should take a look at sensitive issues and the federal issue on privacy. Dr. Lovich suggested written permission could be obtained from private landowners. He noted that the US Geological Survey is good at research and development, but not good at long term maintenance and asked “what is the Son of SWEMP” going to look like? They do have some limitations on what they can do with private information and private property data. Mr. Riley asked about the uploading,

downloading, and conversion of data. He suggested that standards should be encouraged for consistent input of data into the database. It should flow smooth and people should get it right he first time! Mr. Riley thought that people could take a look at the North American Weed Management Association (NAWMA) and their guidance on standard settings since they were the first to try this. Ed Northam said that if this gets too complex, then people will stop getting data. The discussion of linear and point segments came up along with the use of spatial polygons. Dr. Brock suggested that it is very powerful to use these spatial polygons.

The Council asked the question of Ms. Hubbard on the invasive species program for Arizona and where she thinks it may be going in the future. Ms. Hubbard said to start addressing new issues brought up today and to look at the possibility of starting a new workgroup on this mapping structure. People are concerned about invasive species at all levels, from agencies to individuals. How do we create something that is facilitating everybody's efforts and serving everybody's needs? Ms. Hubbard noted that this is the crux of the problem and we need to see how we can meet and address all the needs. Dr. Orr asked, "who the end users will be, and if we fail them, then the whole system will buckle". The question was asked from Dr. Sieg on the authority of a new working group in which Mr. Riley responded that they should possibly wait until after the final report to the Governor. Mr. Riley also asked the question on the flexibility for using this system as an early detection report like tool. Dr. Orr suggested that the Council report to Lori Faeth and Representative Tom O'Halleran to let them know that the council wants connectivity to other systems and if the resources get invested, this mapping system will benefit. We will want her to know that the connections will be made.

During the discussion of the mapping system, questions were asked on taking all pieces of various systems and bringing them together, leveraging existing systems, and sharing of resources. We should plan for a system that work well together and made easy to use. Bill Werner noted to look at state government and an efficient way of putting existing resources together. Mr. Riley suggested drafting a common recommendation. Mr. Riley asked Dr. Orr if he sees this recommendation going as part of this final report due in June or as something separate. Dr. Orr sees it as both and getting the message across to Ms. Faeth (Governor's office) and the forest health council to let her know that basically we think we are going to recommend building a system and encourage compatibility and inter-operability and we would like to encourage it coming from the other direction as well. Mr. Riley asked about the inter-operability and compatibility of Arizona Fire Map and any other systems with other agencies. Ms. Hubbard responded that they are lots of organizations trying to do this, but everyone should be working together. Create something for all to use. She recommends that the working groups work together and all come up with one single recommendation that can be sent off to Ms. Faeth and Representative O'Halleran to let them know that this is something the council is starting to think about. Council will recommend through Mr. McMahon to Ms. Faeth the following; "The council recommends the creation of an Arizona Invasive Species center that will develop and oversee a cross jurisdictional, interactive database and mapping system for invasive species occurrences and treatments. The Council enthusiastically recommends the opportunity to leverage system development with other systems such as SWEMP, Arizona Fire Map, and Arizona Hydrologic Information Systems. Systems should be compatible and interoperable." **Jodi Latimer filed a motion and Bill Werner seconds it. Mr. Riley called the question and there was unanimous consent.**

Continuing on this work group, Bill Werner passed out a 14-page handout from the work group charter and another handout on their recommendations. There was discussion on weed management districts and funding and how to obtain and distribute those funds. Mr. Riley noted that one issue was not to force volunteer groups into any particular structure. Mike Macauley noted that funding is a huge issue. Ms. Latimer noted that authority is broad in conservation districts and there is no complete statewide

coverage and everyone should play tighter. Dr. Brock recommends the money be distributed out of the proposed “center”. The second issue is the various levels of chemical applications. Strike team to deal with these problems. Third issue is education. “Teach the teachers” There are lots of programs already out there, but maybe change the curriculum and offer more resources for teachers. Other issues were discussed. Joanne Roberts commented on money. What is realistic and the expectations of this Council? Mr. Riley asked if there were any other suggestions or requests for actions. None were noted.

Mr. Riley told all working groups to have recommendations ready if possible by next meeting. Mr. Riley also told the working groups to provide Ms. Vasiloff with their most current draft recommendations as soon as possible for inclusion into the May 2 Council meeting.

Leadership and Coordination

Patti Fenner discussed the results of the surveys on where weed managements areas (WMA's) fit in. Thirty percent came back from all polled. Many handouts were passed out including maps of WMA's. She discussed also the lack of a rapid response system, which was also mentioned from the Control & Management working group. An example of this is the closure of the inspection stations. The topic of lack of funding came up again which seems to be the biggest problem for everyone. This group suggests a plan for each region where they will have to submit a report in order to get any funding without forcing them to go non-profit. Need regulation and MOU's; some examples were handed out. Mr. Macauley noted that the structures are already there and we don't need to reinvent the wheel. Ms. Fenner stated that Richard Brusca (Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum) would be joining their team. Heidi Vasiloff asked about the center and would it be part of the Department of Agriculture or is it separate where the director would work independently. What is the vision? They had talked about it being separate. Mr. Riley asked about the organizational charts and thought it may be too much too soon. We should still be at the policy level. Ms. Fenner noted it is better to be specific now and the work group believes this is a good structure. They are open to any suggestions. Mr. Riley asked Jeff Myers about having limited resources for this recommendation and can we get thru appropriations or grants to finance this type of structure or do we re-task it. Mr. Myers agrees, but this working group has ideas to add. Mr. Brusca said to point out the problem and offer a solution, not make recommendations like these. The gap is that there is a lack of infrastructure. Mr. Macauley noted that weed free hay is a two-edge sword and if you place it in the same spot time after time, it will kill the plants and bugs. Mr. Northam noted the hay was designed to protect border lands. Mr. Riley had two observations: where does it fit and what is the best way to fit it in. Need international and interstate coordination.

Anticipation and Outreach

Jodi Latimer said the group stepped back to refocus their thoughts and energies and said thank you to the C&M working group for their PowerPoint presentation. She mentioned the grant that Dr. Orr talked about could be used to purchase geospatial tool kits and make them available. They identified a target ecosystem: Arizona grasslands. The working group decided to do it as a geographical approach using watersheds as our delineator for the initial mapping efforts. The Arizona Association of Conservation Districts did agree to serve as project manager. Their group's recommendations should be ready by May 2nd and a big thanks to the workgroup for their great wording. Ms. Latimer also looked at the advisory list for animals and will have to rework the mapping section and talked about the border inspections stations. Ms. Latimer had thought that both the aquatic strategic plan and Dr. Brock's proposed strategic plan for Arizona had been placed on the parking lot from the last meeting? Last two pages of their handout were about public awareness. She believes that the most important thing in these last two pages is that the message is positive and incentive based. Bill Werner stated that

if the state of Arizona needs to adopt a strategic plan, what does that mean? Mr. Riley saw a need to look at a couple of different strategies and grants thru the Feds to qualify. Need a plan for plants and animals and also approval from the Governor. Need to adopt a process to evaluate the best management processes. Please email Ms. Latimer with any comments. Mr. Riley asked if there were any questions or discussion. None were presented.

A brief welcome statement was made by Duane Shroufe (Co-chair) at 2:30pm. He apologized for not being here sooner but had an appointment with the Governor. He noted that the Council was doing a good job and welcomed Heidi on board who should be able to help to get the report to the Governor on time. We need to make sure we meet the Governors deadline.

Research and Information Management

Dr. Jeff Lovich noted that the final draft has been submitted. They maxed flexibility and stayed anchored in the executive order. They will be very willing to make any revisions, if needed. They have not received any comments from the other working groups yet and they would like some feedback. Mr. Werner asked about using the database for tracking purposes. Dr. Sieg stated that the Heritage Data Management System could track additional information. Mr. Riley said that there is a considerable amount of information on species and tracking negative data, but it can't track a lack of data. Adoption of an invasive species database is preferable and should be inter-operable where it could link both.

Old Business

Dr. Sieg brought up a discussion on mapping sub groups. She thinks there is lots of framework to feed this process. Can we form another working group on this? Ms. Latimer states that we need one, but is now the proper time. Mr. Brusca asked what the expectations are. Glenn Fahringer asked if we were putting the cart before the horse or as Mr. Northam noted, you need a building permit before building. It was asked of this group that since they were "finished", could they work on this and keep it to one page long. Mr. Riley thought we still need to stay anchored in the Executive Order. Dr. Sieg is willing to work on this and asked for any volunteers.

New Business

Ms. Heidi Vasiloff spoke to the council on having a "unified voice" and making sure the council sticks to the executive order. Her question to the group was: "what are the global messages?" Make sure the introduction in the final report hits all of the major components. Mr. Werner stated the comprehensive and effective approach for dealing with invasive species. Dr. Lovich added, "tell why it is bad" using buzz words. Ms. Vasiloff asked the council to "think outside the box" to capture the attention of the audience." She asked the council to start thinking about the title to the report in the next few weeks. Mr. Macauley asked: "what are the benefits of noxious weeds?" "Why does it matter to me?" "What are the financial and environmental costs?" What are the trends on cost and the social expenses? Dr. Lovich stated that the Cave Creek Complex fire is a good of example since it was mostly exotic grasses and plants that fueled the fire. Tell the story! Who is the audience? Is it the Governor and staff? Legislators? We need to talk to the audience that has the power. The report has to "talk" to someone else and the report has to get the point across quickly. Mr. Riley noted that early prevention will save a lot in the future, so what is the cost of prevention? Patti Fenner stated we need more pictures. Discussion on pictures and maybe show some before and after photos that will be attached to the final report. Don't use "pretty" pictures as they may be harder to sell. Chris Trask mentioned something about using the photos of the burnt Saguaro, which degrades the splendor of the state. We want to keep

Arizona looking like Arizona. What is the scope of the problem? Arizona needs to get into the game and should be the leader on this. Ms. Fenner mentioned that we show the gaps and identify them; for example, the lack of operable inspection stations. Mr. Brusca asked about changing the title. Mr. Macauley said to use a common term that will stick out such as weeds.

Ms. Vasiloff would like color photos at least 300 dpi, so please email or mail them to Tom McMahon as soon as possible. Make sure if we are using another person's photos, we get permission and give the credit where due. Ms. Vasiloff asked people to think about the footers and what invasive specie could be used at the bottom. She also mentioned that the color on the report should reflect that something serious is going on. Example: the use of reds would make it stand out and show "danger." Dr. Lovich noted that the weed fact book (published in 1994) was a great format to look back at. Ms. Latimer noted that the Coronado RC&D has photos and that Donna Matthews is a great point of contact. Mr. Macauley could also get some pictures on the changing forest landscapes in Arizona. Dr. Lovich said to do a top "10" list of the unwanted. Mr. Werner asked about the length of the final report in which Mr. Riley responded that it should be a fairly concise document to be no more than 25 pages. Make sure there is no redundancy in the report also. Dr. Lovich came up with a possible title "Arizona Invasive Species: Unwanted Plants and Animals". Use real impactful pictures.

Mr. McMahon asked that on the Agenda for May 2, action items are needed.

Parking Lot

Anything not on the agenda? Have topics of discussion. Have we missed anything? Mr. Riley noted that if the group has a request for action, let him know.

Identification of future meetings dates/times/locations

May 2nd and May 23rd will be the next two meetings. No June dates were set, but Mr. McMahon will coordinate.

Call to the Public

None were presented

Adjourned at 3:26pm